

AMENDMENT AND PRESENTATION OF CLAIMS

Please replace all prior claims in the present application with the following claims, in which no claims are canceled, withdrawn from consideration, or newly presented. Claims 1 and 10 are currently amended; and claims 6-9 have been indicated as allowable.

1. (Currently Amended) An elastic sleeve for a shoe press formed of an elastic material into the shape of a tube to be used as an outer cylinder of a shoe press roll which presses a web material with a long nip width, characterized in that both an inner and an outer diameter of the elastic sleeve is are gradually reduced from both ends to a center in an axial direction.
2. (Original) The elastic sleeve for the shoe press according to claim 1, wherein a difference in inner diameter between both ends and the center is 1 mm to 15 mm.
3. (Original) The elastic sleeve for the shoe press according to claim 2, wherein the difference in inner diameter between both ends and the center is 5 mm to 10 mm.
4. (Original) The elastic sleeve for the shoe press according to claim 1, wherein said elastic sleeve comprises an elastic material and a reinforcing material.
5. (Original) The elastic sleeve for the shoe press according to claim 4, wherein said reinforcing material is a base cloth.
6. (Original) A method of manufacturing an elastic sleeve for a shoe press comprising: a step of stretching a sleeve formed of an uncured or imperfectly cured elastic material between two rolls;

a step of moving said two rolls in directions apart from each other; a step of deflecting said two rolls in such directions that center parts thereof are moved close to each other by utilizing tension of said sleeve; and a step of perfectly curing said elastic material while rotating said sleeve in this state.

7. (Original) The method of manufacturing the elastic sleeve for the shoe press according to claim 6, wherein a deflection degree of said roll is 1 mm to 15 mm.

8. (Original) The method of manufacturing the elastic sleeve for the shoe press according to claim 6, wherein said elastic sleeve comprises an elastic material and a reinforcing material.

9. (Original) The method of manufacturing the elastic sleeve for the shoe press according to claim 8, wherein said reinforcing material is a base cloth.

10. (Currently Amended) A shoe press roll comprising: a support shaft which is not rotated substantially; a press shoe set on said support shaft; a sleeve support member which is mounted on each end of said support shaft and can be rotated around said support shaft; and an elastic sleeve which covers said support shaft and said press shoe and has an end supported by said sleeve support member, said press shoe pressing said elastic sleeve from the inside to the outside, and said elastic sleeve sliding on said press shoe and rotating around said support shaft with said sleeve support member, characterized in that said elastic sleeve has both an inner and an outer diameter gradually reduced from both ends to a center in an axial direction.

11. (Original) The shoe press roll according to claim 10, wherein a difference in inner diameter

between both ends and the center of the elastic sleeve is 1 mm to 15 mm.

12. (Original) The shoe press roll according to claim 10, wherein said elastic sleeve comprises an elastic material and a reinforcing material.

13. (Original) The shoe press roll according to claim 12, wherein said reinforcing material is a base cloth.